

Washington, D.C. - Today, Representatives David Price (NC-04) and Rush Holt (NJ-12) authored a letter to members of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction urging them to prioritize investments in education and research.

"Investments in education and research have made North Carolina a center of high-tech jobs in R&D and the industries that will drive the 21st Century economy," Rep. Price said. "We need to preserve these investments in NC—and across the country—because they ensure our economic success by giving our workers the tools they need to compete with the world and win."

"The best approach for dealing with the economic ills of the country and the deficit is to promote economic growth, and the necessary ingredients are investment in research and education," Rep Holt said. "It is essential that the committee keep this in mind"

The members wrote of education and research investment:

Our investments in education, research and development – including funding for basic science and biomedical research at universities and federal labs and wise incentives for private sector research – have put our economy on the cutting edge of the world's most advanced industries. These investments are a powerful way to spur job growth and are a must for a country that seeks to be competitive in the 21st Century economy.

We can fully develop our nation's human capital only if we offer all our citizens the opportunity to achieve the highest possible levels of education. Strategic investments in education and student aid have made it possible for generations of Americans to obtain a college education, regardless of their income.

Further constraining domestic discretionary funding on education and scientific research will hinder our culture of innovation, adversely affecting our national security and the ability to improve our nation's health and economic recovery. As you continue your work, we strongly urge the Committee to ensure that deficit reduction policies strengthen, rather than harm, the nation's education, science and research infrastructure.

Reps. Price and Holt both bring backgrounds in education and research to the funding debate. Rep. Price attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and taught political science and public policy at Duke University before his election to Congress. His district includes a number of flagship universities and the Research Triangle Park. Rep. Holt is the only research physicist in the House of Representatives. His district includes Princeton University and the Institute for Advanced Study. His constituents are reportedly fond of pointing out "my congressman is a rocket scientist."

The Price-Holt letter has been endorsed by the Association of American Universities, the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities, the Task Force on American Innovation, the Student Aid Alliance, the Coalition for National Security Research, the Coalition for the National Science Foundation, the Energy Sciences Coalition, United for Medical Research and the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research Funding.

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